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Homemakers' chat

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U. S. DEPARTMENT
OF AGRICULTURE

MONDAY, April 19, 1943

SUBJECT: "HOW TO SAVE HIS SUIT." Information from clothing specialists of the U. S. Department of Agriculture.

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In ordinary times any conversation about clothes on Monday of Easter week would probably be about new clothes--a new Easter hat, dress or coat for you... a new Easter suit for the man of the family. But in wartime when supplies are short old clothes...the clothes you have...get the attention. Nobody stocks up on new clothes who doesn't need them. You and your husband both do your bit by making your old clothes do.

So today let's talk about your husband's clothes. Right now a man's civilian suit is one of the most precious garments in the home. If your husband is not wearing it because he's in uniform, you will see to mending it and putting it away safely--or perhaps you will make it over into a suit or dress for yourself or one of the children. But if your husband is still wearing civilian clothes, you and he together will make his suits last as long as possible...get every possible day's wear out of them. You can help by cleaning, pressing and mending the suit...but your husband also can do much to save repairs and keep his suit looking well.

So here are some tips from clothing specialists of the U. S. Department of Agriculture to help save your husband's suits. You can pass these tips along to him.

Any suit lasts longer if it gets brushed often. Brush a suit with the grain of the cloth...inside as well as out...in and around pockets and inside cuffs...if the trousers have cuffs.

And let a suit hang in the open air awhile before it goes into the closet,

especially if the closet isn't ventilated. From time to time give the suit an airing outdoors on a bright, breezy day.

Now some tips on the right way to hang up suits. Put the suit on a hanger as soon as you take it off. And hang it up straight. Don't spoil the press by throwing it carelessly over a chair. Put the coat on a wooden hanger...one of those with broad shoulders made especially for men's coat shoulders. See that the shoulders of the coat set squarely on the hanger. Some of the best hangers have curved hooks that allow the neck of the coat to lie smoothly.

The best way to hang trousers is on a trouser clip, upside down. But if you don't have this kind of hanger, hang trousers over the cross bar of a wooden hanger. If you must use a wire hanger, pad the cross bar with cardboard or thick paper to prevent crosswise creases on the trousers.

When you are traveling and have no hangers with you, hang your coat up by the loop at the back of the neck...or hang it over the back of a chair to save the shape of shoulders and collar. Never carelessly put the sleeve or back of a coat over a peg.

As for cleaning and pressing, take soiled suits promptly to the cleaner-- and take them to a reliable cleaner, who does a thorough job. You save the suit by having it cleaned before it gets too dirty. The extra rubbing necessary to get a very dirty suit clean wears the fabric. And dirt left too long on fabric also damages it.

If you press your husband's suits at home between cleanings, look for spots before you press. Take out any spots before the pressing starts. A warm iron sets some spots so they will never come out. Never set an iron directly on the wool in pressing. When you press, wring a cloth out of warm water. Then lay a press cloth over this damp cloth. Set the iron down squarely...lift it a little...set it down again. Never press the moisture completely out of wool--that

is, never press the wool completely dry or it will look hard and lifeless. Leave just a little steam in it when you are through pressing.

One more pressing point. Be careful about scorch. Wool can scorch even when you have a cloth over it if your iron is too hot.

Many men are careless about exposing wool suits to moths, especially those living away from home with nobody to remind them to put their woolens away promptly and safely.

Here's what the clothing specialists say to these men: "Bring out the suits hanging in the back of the closet once in a while and brush and air them. If you pack your clothes away yourself, have them dry-cleaned first. Pack them in any container that is absolutely tight-- a suit box sealed with tape...paper garment bags, also sealed,...trunks, chests, or tight closets. Play safe and use moth flakes or crystals in with your suits when you store them.

Here are a few more tips on saving suits. Remember that keys carried every day in the hip pocket rub against chairs and wear holes through pocket and pants. Overloading stretches and strains pockets, often tears corners. Pens and pencils in a coat or vest pocket will stain or jab holes in the fabric unless you have clips on them.

Get a felt or leatherette seat for the office chair to save the seat of your trousers from getting shiny and wearing thin. See that your belt is not too wide or thick to fit easily through belt loops. Too wide a belt rubs the loops and makes them fuzzy.

Here's a tip about trousers: Trousers a half inch above the heels of shoes don't get so much rub. So they wear longer than longer trousers.

Last tip: A suit soaked in rain or snow needs to dry slowly in a well-ventilated room away from heat. Brush the suit well after it dries.

Now if you want to know how to mend your husband's suit to perfection... if you want to know some of the professional secrets of repairing so it never shows, you can send for a new publication called "Mending Men's Suits," Miscellaneous Publication 482. This booklet is not free. It costs a dime. And you send your dime and your request to the Government Printing Office, Washington, D. C.

